

made, will lead to the property of these temples being better conserved and the prescribed services more satisfactorily attended to.

18. **Separate Revenue.**—An important measure in connection with the Piravagay or Separate Revenue Department which had been long under the consideration of the Government was adopted during the year. The Piravagay Department which used to administer the revenue under Salt, Abkari, Customs, Tobacco, Opium and Ganja, Marine, Arms and Ammunition amounting to more than 45 per cent of the total revenue of the State, was re-organized and placed on a more satisfactory footing. The Dewan Peishkars in addition to their various other duties had to supervise not only the collection of the revenue of this Department but also the administration of the rules and regulations framed for the protection of such revenue. With a view to afford relief to the Peishkars and for the proper future administration of these important items of revenue under a uniform and definite policy in the interests of both the Government and the general public, His Highness the Maha Rajah was pleased to sanction the organization of a separate Excise Department, working under the control of a special officer styled the "Excise Commissioner".

The functions of this Department are the supervision of the tobacco, customs, and salt offices and distilleries and the prevention of smuggling of salt, opium, ganja, tobacco and arrack and illicit tapping for toddy and arrack, distillation of arrack and unauthorised growth of the ganja and tobacco plants; the examination of tobacco, salt, opium and arrack shops and generally to develop, collect and protect the items of revenue above referred to and to administer the rules and regulations framed for the collection and protection of such revenue.

The practical working of the new Department belongs to the current year. One notable change made in regard to the administration of one of the items of revenue of this Department, *viz.* opium and ganja, was the introduction of the Excise system. Under this system this item is expected to yield an additional revenue of Rs. 45,000. The excise system in regard to Abkari is already in force in the two Southern Divisions, and when the present Abkari contract expires in the two Northern Divisions, it will be introduced in those Divisions also.

Salt.—The total quantity of home-made, Bombay and Tinnevely salt available for issue was 11,30,931 maunds. The sales were 7,83,547 maunds as against 7,49,142 maunds in 1979. Though there was an increase in the sales to the extent of 34,405 maunds the revenue amounted to only Rs. 17,90,062 or Rs. 1,37,775 less than in the previous year owing to the reduction in the selling price from Rs. 2½ to Rs. 2 per maund during the latter part of the year.

Home-made salt.—Besides the existing Allams *viz.* those at Tamarakulam, Rajakkamangalam and Variyoor, the old Colachel Allam which was resuscitated was also worked during the year. The total out-turn from all the above Allams was 1,78,461 maunds.

Customs.—During the year export duty on prepared palmyra fibre was reduced from 2½ to 1 per cent and the tariff value thereon from Rs. 15 to Rs. 12½ per cwt.

19. **Sanitation.** During the past year, the number of births registered was 58,657 and that of deaths 42,243. 1,55,655 persons were vaccinated during the year, of whom over 13,000 were infants.